alia, includes policy for setting up of joint ventures abroad in the fertilizer sector. The issue relating to revival/restructuring of sick fertilizer units and the likely possibility of setting up of brownfield projects by the private sector at the existing sites of sick fertilizer units and preparation of a well defined policy note thereon is under consideration of the Government. Government's recognition of the need to set up ammonia urea projects in countries having abundant reserves of natural gas is evident from the clearance of Oman India Fertilizer Project which was accorded by the Government on 20.6.2000.

Reduction in cost of production of fertilizers

† 1413. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have explored the possibilities to reduce the expenditures on production of urea fertilizers in public and private sectors;

(b) if so, the percentage of reduction likely to be effected in the present production cost of fertilizers; and

(c) if the answer to part (a) above be in the negative the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) to (c) Controlling the expenditure under the Retention Price-cum-Subsidy Scheme (RPS) implemented for production of urea, which is the only fertilizer under the Retention Price-cum-Subsidy Scheme, has constantly engaged the attention of the Government. Only recently Government has reduced the subsidy payment to urea manufacturers showing high capacity utilisation both in private and public sectors by an interim reassessment of capacity which has resulted in a subsidy saving of approximately Rs. 450 crore per annum. Tightening of norms and actuals that go into the computation of retention price in successive pricing periods under the Retention Price-cum-Subsidy Scheme, encouragement to units for implementing energy saving measures such as purge gas recovery (PGR) unit, etc.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

and promoting technological improvement to improve energy efficiency have led to an increase in energy efficiency of the urea producing industry by 12-13% over the last 15 years as has been noted in the report of the High Powered Review Committee on Fertilizer Pricing.

Environment projects launched between 1996—2000

1414. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the environment projects launched by Government in 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 and 1999-2000;

(b) the funds earmarked for those projects and the amount allocated by Government for those projects;

(c) the actual amount spent on those projects; and

(d) the year-wise and the project-wise break-up thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests is implementing several schemes under which large number of projects are taken up. Year-wise plan allocation and expenditure from 1996-97 to 1999-2000 are given below.

Years	Budget Estimates	Revised Estimates	Actual Expenditure
1996-1997	469.40	456.39	429.28
1997-1998	543.70	440.00	406.70
1998-1999	704.09	468.00	498.05
1999-2000	700.00	610.00	551.74

Damage to forests corridor in Orissa, M.P., Bihar, W.B.

1415. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that forest corridor connections between Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal are getting severely damaged due to illicit forest clearance, mining, etc.;